

Message Text

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44

ACTION EA-14

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INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8084

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CONFIDENTIAL BANGKOK 17391

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, TH

SUBJECT: COMMENT ON JACK FOISIE L. A. TIMES ARTICLE OF 11/2

"BLOODSHED INCREASES ON THAI LAO BORDER."

REF: USINFO WASH DC UNCLASSIFIED CABLE OF 11/3/73

1. FOR THE MOST PART THE MISSION FINDS THE REFERENCED FOISIE ARTICLE FACTUAL. HOWEVER, THERE ARE TWO POINTS CONTAINED IN THE ARTICLE THAT ARE OFF THE MARK AND REQUIRE CLARIFICATION FOR THE RECORD.

2. FOISIE SAYS "EMPTIED VILLAGES ARE SOMETIMES RAZED BY THAI FIGHTER-BOMBERS USING NAPALM BOMBS." NO SUCH CASE HAS COME TO OUR ATTENTION SINCE 1970, EITHER IN NAN OR ANY OTHER PART OF THE COUNTRY. FOISIE IS HARKING BACK TO THE 1968-1969 PERIOD WHEN AIR STRIKES OF THIS KIND WERE CARRIED OUT. IN RECENT YEARS THE RTG HAS LEARNED THAT THIS TYPE OF MILITARY SUPPRESSION OPERATION IS SELF-DEFEATING. THE RTG HAS, AS AN ALTERNATIVE, ADHERED CLOSELY TO ITS CIVIL, POLICE, MILITARY (CPM) APPROACH TO CI WHICH IS BASICALLY AIMED AT WINNING THE ALLEGIANCE OF THE POPULATION, NOT ALIENATING THEM THROUGH INDISCRIMINATE BOMBING AND STAND-OFF ARTILLERY ATTACKS.

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3. FOISIE ALSO CLAIMS THAT BOTH THAI AND AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS DIS-COURAGE VISITORS TO THE BORDER AREAS. HE STATES, "WHILE THE U.S. EMBASSY IN BANGKOK CANNOT RESTRICT AMERICAN CIVILIAN TRAVEL, IT HAS ASKED THE THAIS TO DO SO." THIS EMBASSY HAS NOT PLACED RE-STRICTION ON EITHER NON-OFFICIAL OR OFFICIAL TRAVEL TO THE BORDER AREAS. NOR HAVE WE ASKED THE THAIS TO RESTRICT PRIVATE AMERICAN TRAVEL. THE EMBASSY HAS PLACED RESTRICTIONS ON OFFICIAL TRAVEL IN CERTAIN AREAS OF NAN PROVINCE (SECONDARY ROAD TRAVEL IN PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE AREAS) BUT THERE HAS BEEN NO BAN ON TRAVEL BY NON-OFFICIAL AMERICANS. THE RTG, OBVIOUSLY, DESIRES TO KEEP ALL TYPES OF TRAVEL INTO THESE SECURITY-SENSITIVE AREAS TO A BARE MINIMUM BECAUSE OF DANGERS INVOLVED AND ON-GOING RTG OPERATIONS. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, HOWEVER, THEY HAVE NOT BEEN OVERLY RESTRICTIVE.
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